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Travel | Reise: Beat a path to the Bernese Oberland



Beatenberg | Paraponting over the valley.



Beatenberg | Grindelwald's First cliff walk had amazing views.



Beatenberg | First Flyer (flying fox to Schreckfled).



Beatenberg | Bachalpsee with Eiger in background.

Europe's longest village wonderful for wanderers and thrill-seekers

Beatenberg is the longest village in Europe, extending for several kilometres and is situated at an altitude of 1200 metres. It is located in the Interlaken district in the canton of Bern. It is known as the sun terrace in the Bernese Oberland and has an amazing setting above Lake Thun.

We stayed at the lovely and quiet campsite with stunning views of the many mountains, especially the Eiger, Monch and Jungfrau. We all enjoyed the visit from the baker with his mutschli, weggli and croissants, although not great for the waistline – delicious all the same!

We watched an incredible amount of parachutes, paragliders and delta wing gliders gliding over the lakes and mountains... note the word WATCHED! You wouldn't get any of us in those gliders, although they must have had an awesome view from up there.

Beatenberg is a wonderful place to stay and is an ideal starting place for a huge amount of trips around the Bernese Oberland. One of our favourite mountains was First.

Our adventure on the First

We went by train to Grindelwald, another beautiful and picturesque village, and another gateway to many mountain hiking trails and adventures. First offered so much;

the boys couldn't believe what they were about to experience.

We started our epic adventure by taking the gondola to the summit where we found the breath-taking First Cliff Walk created from a rock walkway, a single-rope hanging bridge and a metal catwalk. The catwalk provided a spectacular view towards the Eiger and the valley below. This was a real thrill – absolutely unbelievable! After taking in the beautiful scenery along this part of the trail, we took a more leisurely walk to the Bachalpsee, a natural alpine lake, which is also used to generate power for Grindelwald, although this is only just noticeable.

Upon our return Daniel and Richard took the First Flyer (a Flying Fox) to Schreckfeld. The boys were secured into a harness and took the zip line along a steel cable for 800 metres, reaching speeds of up to 84km per hour! The drop was 210 metres and it was all over in 45 seconds! At times they were about 50 metres above the alpine pastures, airborne! Adrian and I didn't take this venturesome option, but walked at our pace down the slope.

From Schreckfeld to Bort we took mountain carts (or drift bikes) along the roughish trail. I was a little hesitant but the boys were very persuasive! Of course I was the last one to reach Bort, but at least I didn't fall

Beatenberg



off like Richard (didn't hurt himself though, thankfully). This was an amazing feat which we all thoroughly enjoyed. At Bort there is a lovely playground with plenty of activities for the kids to choose from, but the boys were 'too big' for this and naturally it wasn't adventurous enough!

From Bort to Grindelwald we hired trottibikes (scooters) for the 4.5 kilometre journey on asphalt roads through beautiful meadows; this was truly stunning (and for me, not as dangerous, as I could go at my own speed).

What a totally amazing experience! The boys were inspired, thrilled and excited with their mountain adventures. They certainly had plenty to tell their grandparents when we arrived back at Beatenberg campsite! We all thoroughly recommend this exhilarating excursion for the young and the young-at-heart!

Marianne Drummond

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